

T O

A C I T I Z E N.

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S I R,

IF, by your letter to the Provost, you meant well to the cause you are engaged to support, prudence should have dictated, to attempt at least the semblance of truth, and to avoid the ridicule of absurd assertions. Mr S——— was a member of the Town-council before any person dreamed that the present interest was ever to prevail there; and he became a magistrate before that interest was proposed.

Being well assured, that Mr S———'s introduction into the council arose from his being the friend and partner of Provost Stuart, I cannot impute *his emergence from obscurity* to those connections which you mention. Some of his relations were at that time better employed. The great work of their own elevation was a more important object to them.

But what is the obscurity you indiscreetly mention? Is not Mr S——— engaged in the same business in which the father of a man, now great, acquired a sufficiency to portion his younger son; who, like the prodigal, wasted it in riotous living, and went into another land: where he indeed fed not upon husks; for he fattened upon the spoils of his country.

Instructions, it would seem, have been necessary to the friends of that great man, while fervent protestations have soothed his arrogance,

gance, and flattering assurances fed his pride. But the character of our Chief Magistrate preserves him from the suspicion of descending to the one, and therefore must have protected him from the other.

Service, though familiar to the pen of a hackney'd writer, is disagreeable to the ear of a free citizen. Sir L.——— may attempt to exact from his adherents what it imports, and they may slavishly comply ; but an independent spirit will never bend so low. If the Provost had come under bonds and engagements inconsistent with this spirit, his conduct, like that of some of his predecessors, would have evinced to the public the nature of his bondage, and what the result was ; and he would not have stood as he does in their opinion. That he came under such engagements, and broke them, the public will not believe, either upon the great man's word or yours. He has discovered zeal in the service of the community ; but I am afraid, has shown too little of that *lively* attachment to Sir L.——— which was expected of him ; and therefore was, by your friends, justly thought *insipid*.

Sir L.——— has told you, that the Provost of Edinburgh grew formidable by affecting his service, and that he employed his own interest against him. What vanity ! Are the citizens of Edinburgh so blind, as not to see, that the greatest enemy to that influence was Sir L.——— himself ? Are they so dull, as not to have long ago discovered, that money will not make up for the want of every other qualification in a member of parliament ? The compliment you make to Mr D.———le should not, I think, be very agreeable to this immoveable friend of Sir L.———'s. Is *he* lively too in his protestations of firmness to that interest, which

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is alone to be the criterion of a good citizen? Is he the only man whose fitness for the office is insured by his protestations of fidelity, not to the interests of the town, but to those of Sir L——— D———? It is to be hoped he is. The good Old Town will not furnish many who are willing to be tried by that standard.

You are pleased to say, That the Provost has had the boldness to oppose his *benefactor*. Can you produce any instances in proof of this insinuation? I have been long acquainted with the Provost; and I never heard of his having received any benefactions from that or any other quarter, connected with the city of Edinburgh, or its politics. What title therefore had you, or those men of reflection and probity whom you speak of, to be surpris'd at Mr S———'s following his inclinations (suppose duty out of the question) in opposing or not opposing Sir L——— as he thought proper.

Your concluding paragraphs you are no doubt very fond of, on account of the quaint expressions and brilliant thoughts which they contain. It is generally believed, however, that if *duplicity* of conduct had been any part of the Provost's character, his success would have been more certain. If, prodigal of his respects, he had smiled, and wished prosperity to measures he disapproved of, there would have been some chance of his being numbered among servants accustomed to flatter and betray. But his friends have the satisfaction to think, that he has acted a very different part; and the public has already reaped one benefit from his opposition, I mean, that respectable names appear for the merchant and trades council in this election. You may tell your friend, that this would not have happened had the Provost been his slave.

AN OLD MAGISTRATE.

Edinburgh, Sept. 28. 1776.

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It is also to be the criterion of a good education.



